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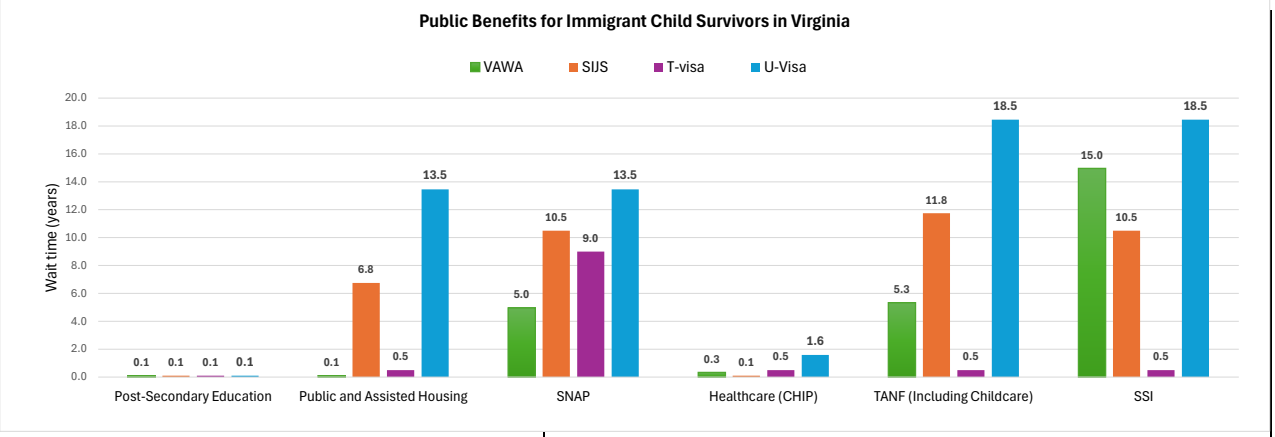
State Justice Institute

American University Washington College of Law

Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivor Children in Virginia						
By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento, and Leslye E. Orloff (August 5, 2026)						
	VAWA	SIJS	T-visa	U-Visa	Governing Law	Conditions Notes
Post-Secondary Education	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	State	In Virginia, all students without **regard to immigration status** may qualify for in-state tuition and financial aid if they attended high school for at least 2 years; graduated or earned a GED in Virginia; and Virginia tax filings by themselves or a parent/guardian for at least 2 years prior to enrollment in an VA public institution of higher education. In-state and tution and financial aid is also available to refugees who reside in Virginia.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWAs eligible upon filing, T visas, U visas and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	5.0	10.5	9.0	13.5	Federal	**Must be lawful permanent residents.** Must also be under 18 , disabled, elderly who was lawfully residing in the U.S. on 8/22/96, have been a qualified immigrant for 5 years or a lawful permanent resident with 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit measured from the date they receive work authorization. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. T visa victims are exempt from the 5 year bar and 40 quarter requirement. SIJS (age 18+) and U visa victims who work become eligible 10 years after receiving work authorization and those who do not have 40 quarters of work credit when they become lawful permanent residents would need to wait to complete the 5 year bar. SIJS or U child who can use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less.
Healthcare (CHIP)	0.3	0.1	0.5	1.6	State	**Lawfully present** children under the age of 19 and pregnant persons are eligible for Virginia's state-funded health care.
TANF (Including Childcare)	5.3	11.8	0.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar)
SSI	15.0	10.5	0.5	18.5	Federal	Federal laws apply no state funded SSI.
						0.1 = immediately eligible at filing



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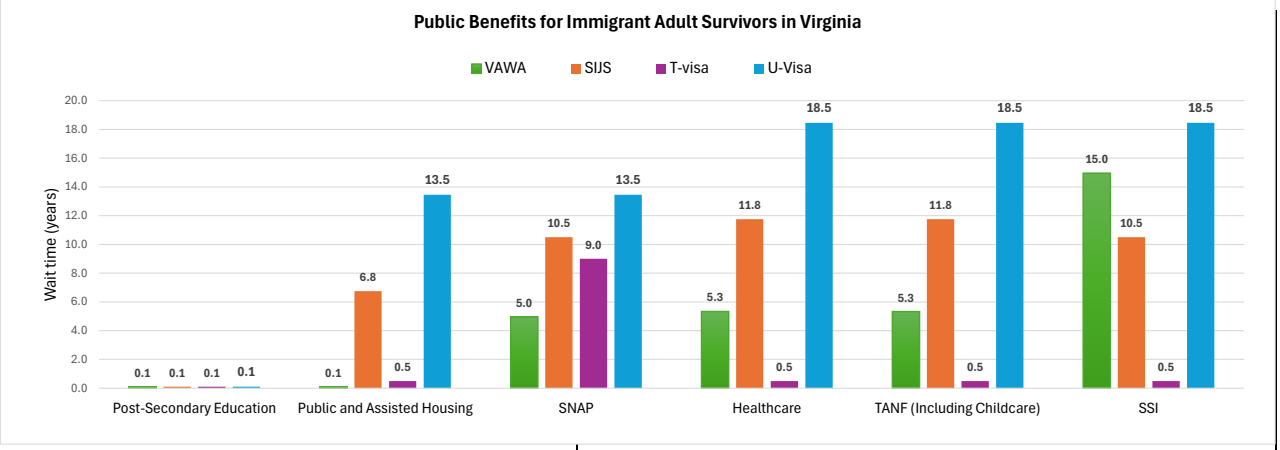
Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivor Adults in Virginia						
By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento, and Leslye E. Orloff (August 5, 2026)						
	VAWA	SIJS	T-visa	U-Visa	Governing Law	Conditions Notes
Post-Secondary Education	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	State	In Virginia, all students without regard to immigration status may qualify for in-state tuition and financial aid if they attended high school for at least 2 years; graduated or earned a GED in Virginia; and Virginia tax filings by themselves or a parent/guardian for at least 2 years prior to enrollment in an VA public institution of higher education. In-state and tution and financial aid is also available to refugees who reside in Virginia.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWAs eligible upon filing, T visas, U visas and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	5.0	10.5	9.0	13.5	Federal	**Must be lawful permanent residents.** Must also be under 18 , disabled, elderly who was lawfully residing in the U.S. on 8/22/96, have been a qualified immigrant for 5 years or a lawful permanent resident with 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit measured from the date they receive work authorization. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. T visa victims are exempt from the 5 year bar and 40 quarter requirement. SIJS (age 18+) and U visa victims who work become eligible 10 years after receiving work authorization and those who do not have 40 quarters of work credit when they become lawful permanent residents would need to wait to complete the 5 year bar. SIJS or U child who can use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less.
Healthcare	5.3	11.8	0.5	18.5	Federal/State	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar). In Virginia prenatal care, comprehensive health care, and 12 months postpartum care are available to all persons without regrard to immigration status.
TANF (Including Childcare)	5.3	11.8	0.5	18.5	State	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar)
SSI	15.0	10.5	0.5	18.5	Federal	Federal laws apply no state funded SSI.
						0.1 = immediately eligible at filing



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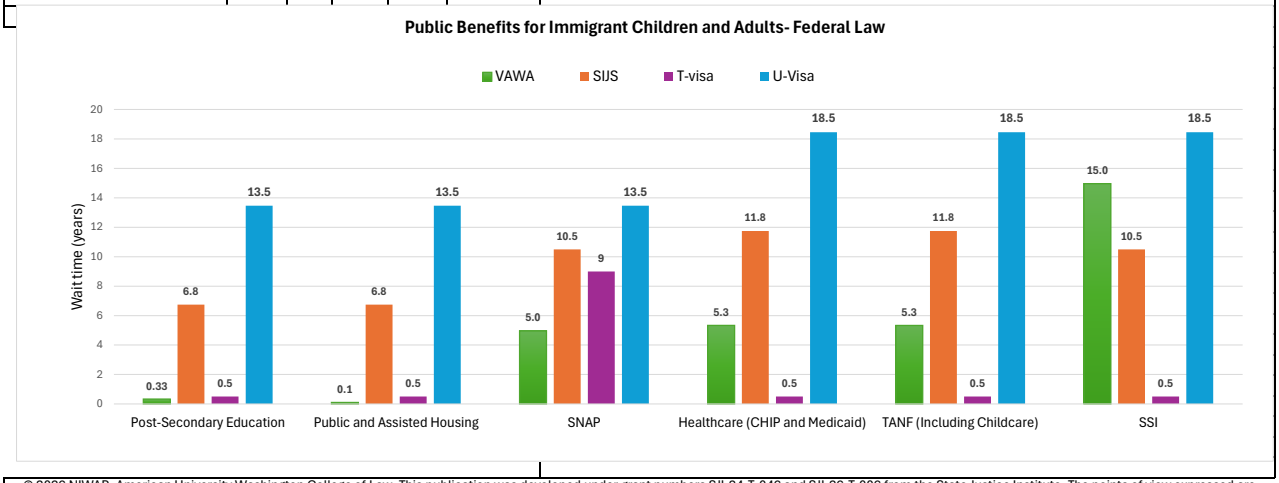
Federal Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivors

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento, and Leslye E. Orloff (August 5, 2026)

	VAWA	SIJS	T-visa	U-Visa	Governing Law	Notes
Post-Secondary Education	0.33	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	**Must be qualified immigrants**.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWA self-petition eligible upon filing; T visa, U visa and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	5.0	10.5	9	13.5	Federal	**Must be lawful permanent residents.** Must also be under 18 , disabled, elderly who was lawfully residing in the U.S. on 8/22/96, have been a qualified immigrant for 5 years or a lawful permanent resident with 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit measured from the date they receive work authorization. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. T visa victims are exempt from the 5 year bar and 40 quarter requirement. SIJS (age 18+) and U visa victims who work become eligible 10 years after receiving work authorization and those who do not have 40 quarters of work credit when they become lawful permanent residents would need to wait to complete the 5 year bar. SIJS or U child who can use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less.
Healthcare (CHIP and Medicaid)	5.3	11.8	0.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar)
TANF (Including Childcare)	5.3	11.8	0.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar)
SSI	15.0	10.5	0.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be a lawful permanent resident and have 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit, and subject to 5 year bar if arrived after 8/22/96**. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. T visas exempt from 40 quarter and 5 year bar and are eligible for 7 years after becoming a qualified immigrant. Children can use credit from themsleves and that their parents earned when they were under the age of 18. Children who use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less. U visa victims eligibe 5 years after lawful permanent residence if have earned 40 quarters work credit. VAWAs calculated as 10 years after attaining work authorization. Spouses of citizens will be eligible 3.4 years faster.



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VAWA - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Virginia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (August 5, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years citizen spouse/parent/ stepparent	Total years LPR spouse/parent/ stepparent	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category		
Filing VAWA Self-petition	0						VAWA self-petitioners who are abused by citizens can file their green card applications at the same time as they file their self-petitions.	PRUCOL		
Prima Facie Determination	3 to 4	Months		0.33	0.3	0.3	VAWA self-petitioners abused by citizens who file green card applications together with their VAWA self-petition receive **work authorization i**n a similar time frame.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
VAWA Self- Petition Approval	48.5	Months		4.04	4.0	4.0	All VAWA self-petitioners receive **deferred action** a formal protection against deportation.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Apply for Green Card	0			0.00	4.0	4.0	VAWA self-petitioners who are abused by lawful permanent residents receive **work authorization** and are eligible to file green card applications once their self-petition is approved.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Green Card Approval	22.00	Months	22	1.83	**4.0**	**5.9**	Lawful Permanent Residence	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant	average	5.0
Apply for Naturalization	3	Years		3	7.0	8.9		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Naturalization approval	7.50	Months	7.5	0.63	**7.7**	**9.5**	Naturalized Citizen	Citizen		
Naturalization (N-400)	Months									
Norfolk, VA	7.5									
Green Card (I-485)	Months									
Norfolk, VA	22									

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SIJS - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Virginia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (August 5, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category
Judicial Findings						Must obtain judicial findings before the child turns the age of majority in the state.	None
Filing for SIJS	0				0.1	Must file before child turns age 21.	Lawfully Present
SIJS Adjudication - Approval	6	Months		0.50	0.5		Lawfully Present
Apply for Green Card	40	Months		3.33	3.8	The SIJS applicant's priority date is date USCIS accepts the SIJS application for processing.	Lawfully Present
Green Card Approval	35.0	Months		2.92	**6.8**	When SIJS applicants are granted lawful permanent residence they are **work authorized** and receive protection from deportation.	Qualified Immigrant
Apply for Naturalization	5	Years		5.00	11.8		Qualified Immigrant
Naturalization approval	7.50	Months		0.63	**12.4**	Naturalized Citizen	Citizen
Naturalization (N-400)	Months						
Norfolk, VA	7.5						
Green Card (I-485)	Months		*SIJS is employment based				
SCOPS	35						

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T Visa - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Virginia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (August 5, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years if trafficking case is completed when victim is granted a T visa	Total years if case not completed	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category		
T visa Declarations							Best practice (not required).	None		
Filing for T visa	0			0.00				PRUCOL		
Bona Fide Determination	6	Months		0.50	0.5	0.5	Includes **deferred action** a formal protection against deportation and **work authorization.**	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
T Visa Adjudication - Approval	29.5	Months		2.5	2.5	2.5		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Apply for Green Card	3	Years		3.00	0.0	5.5	Either three years or when trafficking investigation complete whichever is sooner.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Green Card Approval	42.5	Months		3.54	**6.0**	**9.0**		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant	average	7.5
Apply for Naturalization	5	Years		5.00	11.0	14.0		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Naturalization approval	7.50	Months		0.63	**11.6**	**14.6**		Citizen		
Naturalization (N-400)	Months									
Norfolk, VA	7.5									

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U Visa - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Virginia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (August 5, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category
U Visa Certification						Obtaining a certification from a government official is a required prerequisite to filing for a U visa.	None
Filing for U visa	0	Months		0.00	0.0	Certification is valid for 6 months. Must file within 6 months of the certification date or must obtain a new certification.	PRUCOL
Bona Fide Determination	19	Months		1.6	1.6	Includes **deferred action** a formal protection against deportation and **work authorization.**	Lawfully Present
U Visa Adjudication - Approval	8.5	Years		8.5	8.5	As of October 2025 they began issuing U visa approvals for cases filed in early 2017.	Lawfully Present
Apply for Green Card	3	Years		3.00	11.5	Eligible to apply three years after receiving a U visa.	Lawfully Present
Green Card Approval	23.5	Months		1.96	**13.5**		Qualified Immigrant
Apply for Naturalization	5	Years		5.00	18.5		Qualified Immigrant
Naturalization approval	7.50	Months		0.63	**19.1**		Citizen
Naturalization (N-400)	Months						
Norfolk, VA	7.5						

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